

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----071619 101111Z /12
P 101043Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO WHITE/HOUSE WASHDC PRIROITY
SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9459

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 TOKYO 12467

EXDIS

WHITE HOUSE FOR THE PRESIDENT, DR. BRZEZINSKI, AND
HENRY OWEN

STATE FOR SECRETARY AND EA, MR. HOLBROOKE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: JA, XG, XT
SUBJECT: JAPAN, EUROPE AND BONN SUMMIT: POLITICAL ASPECTS

REF: TOKYO 12466

1. SUMMARY: PROMINENCE OF JAPAN'S ECONOMIC TROUBLES WITH
WESTERN EUROPE HAS MADE GOJ MORE AWARE OF ITS EUROPEAN TIES
AND THEIR STILL ESSENTIALLY ONE-DIMENSIONAL CHARACTER, AND
HAS CONVINCED SOME WITHIN GOVERNMENT THAT WAYS MUST BE
FOUND TO EXPAND RELATIONSHIP BEYOND THE ECONOMIC. IN
ADDITION TO ECONOMIC IMPETUS, GRADUAL EVOLUTION IN POPULAR
ATTITUDES HERE TOWARD JAPAN'S PROPER WORLD ROLE IN GENERAL,
AND TOWARD SECURITY QUESTIONS IN PARTICULAR, HAS MADE MORE
POSSIBLE INCREMENTAL DEVELOPMENT OF BROADER JAPAN-EUROPEAN
DIALOGUE. THIS CHANGING PERSPECTIVE, COMBINED WITH
SENSITIVITY TOWARD EXPECTED CRITICISM OF THEIR ECONOMIC
PERFORMANCE, WILL INFLUENCE JAPANESE APPROACH TO BONN
SUMMIT. OUTCOME OF SUMMIT AS INTERPRETED IN JAPAN, QUITE
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APART FROM ITS ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES, WILL IN TURN AFFECT
PACE OF DEVELOPMENT OF MORE MATURE JAPAN-EUROPEAN RELATION-
SHIP. END SUMMARY

JAPAN AND WESTERN EUROPE:

2. MASSIVE IMBALANCE IN JAPAN-EC TRADE, AND CRITICISM THIS
HAS ENGENDERED, HAS FOCUSED INCREASING GOJ ATTENTION ON

THOUGHTFUL, INTERNATIONALLY-ORIENTED JAPANESE BELIEVE IN THE IMPERATIVES OF INTERDEPENDENCE, BOTH WITHIN COMMUNITY OF ADVANCED INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES AND BETWEEN THAT GROUP AND REST OF NON-COMMUNIST WORLD. HOWEVER, TO JAPANESE, INTERDEPENDENCE WITH UNITED STATES IS A FAR MORE OBVIOUS IMPERATIVE; THAT WITH EUROPE IS MUCH LESS APPARENT AND LESS FERVENTLY FELT. DIRECT BILATERAL TRADE WITH WESTERN EUROPE, WHILE LARGE IN ABSOLUTE TERMS, IS STILL RELATIVELY SMALL PORTION OF JAPAN'S OVERALL TRADE. ECONOMIC INTERDEPENDENCE THUS IS LESS DIRECT AND MORE SUBTLE, STEMMING FROM THE STAKE BOTH HAVE IN MAINTENANCE OF A SMOOTHLY FUNCTIONING INTERNATIONAL TRADING SYSTEM. IF THE JAPANESE FAIL FULLY TO APPRECIATE DEGREE OF THEIR ECONOMIC INTERDEPENDENCE WITH WESTERN EUROPE, THEY HAVE AN EVEN SHADOWIER PERCEPTION OF THEIR SHARED POLITICAL INTERESTS AND GOALS. JAPANESE CONCERNED WITH THIS PROBLEM ARGUE WITH CONSIDERABLE JUSTIFICATION THAT SAME DEGREE OF MISPERCEPTION OBTAINS IN EUROPE. POLLS OF EUROPEANS ON SUBJECT OF JAPAN, WELL PUBLICIZED BY JAPANESE MEDIA, REVEAL SURPASSING IGNORANCE OF THIS COUNTRY AND ITS ROLE IN ASIA AND THE WORLD. JAPANESE ARE CONVINCED THAT CHARACTERIZATION OF JAPAN AS NATION OF TRANSISTOR SALESMEN IS STILL WIDELY BELIEVED IN EUROPE.

3. GOJ, OR AT LEAST MOFA, ACKNOWLEDGES NEED TO DEVELOP BROADER JAPAN-EUROPEAN TIES, LESS VULNERABLE TO PRESSURES
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SEVERE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS CAN GENERATE, IN WHICH EACH SIDE BETTER UNDERSTANDS PROSPECTS AND LIMITATIONS OF OTHER. MOFA ASSUMES PROGRESS IN CHANGING PREVAILING ATTITUDES, ON BOTH SIDES, IS LIKELY TO BE GLACIAL, BUT SEES FUKUDA VISIT AS OPPORTUNITY TO BEGIN.

THE SUMMIT:

4. JAPANESE LEADERSHIP HAS COME TO PLACE MAJOR EMPHASIS ON INSTITUTION OF ECONOMIC SUMMITRY AS MEANS OF BUTTRESSING JAPAN'S CLAIM TO MORE SIGNIFICANT, IF STILL MODEST, WORLD ROLE AND BUILDING BROADER AND MORE DURABLE RELATIONSHIP WITH EUROPE. FOR JAPANESE, RAMBOUILLET I WAS SIGNIFICANT AS THE FIRST TRULY MULTILATERAL MAJOR-COUNTRY SUMMIT TO WHICH THEY HAD BEEN INVITED SINCE THE WAR. BECAUSE IT WAS EXCLUSIVELY CONCERNED WITH ECONOMIC ISSUES, JAPAN DID NOT HAVE TO CONSIDER ITSELF IN A SECOND-RANK POSITION. RAMBOUILLET WAS SEEN AS MARKING JAPAN'S RE-EMERGENCE UPON WORLD SCENE AS CO-EQUAL WITH OTHER ADVANCED INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES, AND AS OPPORTUNITY TO NURTURE CLOSER RELATIONS WITH THOSE POWERS. POLITICAL SYMBOLISM OF THEIR PARTICIPATION IN FIRST SUMMIT,

AND SUCCEEDING ONES AS WELL, HAS BECOME AS IMPORTANT TO JAPAN AS THE ECONOMIC DECISIONS TAKEN. JAPANESE WILL THUS LOOK UPON BONN SUMMIT AS POLITICAL EVENT OF MAJOR CONSEQUENCE, AND EXPECT TO UNDERSCORE THEIR MORE ACTIVE WORLD ROLE BY HOSTING NEXT ONE.

5. JAPANESE ANTICIPATE CONSIDERABLE CRITICISM OF THEIR ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE AT BONN. WHILE THEY BELIEVE STATISTICS WILL SUPPORT THEIR CONTENTION THAT THEIR

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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P 101043Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO WHITE/HOUSE WASHDC PRIORITY
SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9460

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 03 TOKYO 12467

EXDIS

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STATE FOR SECRETARY AND EA, MR. HOLBROOKE

ANNOUNCED GROWTH RATE GOAL STILL CAN BE ACHIEVED, THE CONTINUED MASSIVE CURRENT ACCOUNT SURPLUS WILL BE AN EMBARRASSMENT. PRIME MINISTER'S RECENT PUBLIC STATEMENTS INDICATE HE MAY BEGIN TO TAKE OFFENSIVE AT BONN, ARGUING THAT JAPAN'S OVERALL PERFORMANCE IN TERMS OF GROWTH RATE AND INFLATION EQUALS OR SURPASSES EFFORTS OF OTHER PARTICIPANTS. HE WILL ADD THAT JAPAN IS NOW DOING ALL IT CAN TO REDUCE ITS CURRENT ACCOUNT SURPLUS, AND THAT OTHER COUNTRIES MUST CONTROL INFLATION AND WORK TO INCREASE EXPORTS IF THEY WANT BETTER RESULTS.

6. IN PART OUT OF DESIRE TO MUTE EXPECTED CRITICISM, OR MUFFLE ITS EFFECT, WE SUSPECT JAPANESE WOULD NOT BE AVERSE TO THIS MEETING TAKING ON A SLIGHTLY BROADER CHARACTER THAN ITS PREDECESSORS, WITH SOMEWHAT MORE PRONOUNCED POLITICAL DIMENSION. THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT

WE EXPECT GOJ DELEGATION TO BONN SUMMIT TO ATTEMPT TO
DIVERT DISCUSSION FROM MACRO-ECONOMIC TO SECURITY ISSUES.
JAPANESE WILL RETAIN FOR LONG TIME TO COME STRONG
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INHIBITIONS IN ADDRESSING SECURITY AND DEFENSE PROBLEMS
IN INTERNATIONAL FORUMS. HOWEVER, FUKUDA AND HIS
COLLEAGUES MAY MORE READILY ACKNOWLEDGE THAT ECONOMIC
ISSUES WHICH ARE FOCUS OF SUMMIT HAVE PROFOUND POLITICAL
RAMIFICATIONS, INTERNATIONAL AS WELL AS DOMESTIC.
JAPANESE RECOGNIZE THAT FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES ARE INVOLVED,
INCLUDING EVEN QUESTION OF VIABILITY OF DEMOCRACY IN
COPING WITH PROBLEMS OF ADVANCED INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY,
WHICH MUST BE ADDRESSED OPENLY AND URGENTLY. THIS
INEVITABLY IMPLIES A DEGREE OF POLITICAL AS WELL AS
ECONOMIC COORDINATION, AND IT IS THIS CONCEPT WITH WHICH
JAPANESE APPEAR MORE COMFORTABLE NOW THAN IN YEARS PAST.

7. IN ADDITION TO HIS PARTICIPATION AT BONN, FUKUDA WILL
PAY BRIEF VISITS TO PARIS, BEFORE SUMMIT, AND BRUSSELS
AFTER, WHERE HE WILL MEET WITH ROY JENKINS AS WELL AS
PREMIER TINDERMANS. BRUSSELS VISIT WILL BE OCCASION FOR
MAJOR SPEECH BY FUKUDA ON JAPAN AND WEST EUROPE.
WHILE MOFA OFFICERS RECOGNIZE EUROPE WILL NOT BE WAITING
WITH BATED BREATH, THEY HOPE SPEECH WILL BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY
AS SINCERE "OVERTURE" TOWARD EUROPE AND COMPREHENSIVE
STATEMENT OF JAPAN'S VIEW OF RELATIONSHIP. AS DESCRIBED
TO US, FUKUDA WOULD AFFIRM POLITICAL AS WELL AS ECONOMIC
IMPORTANCE OF JAPAN TO EUROPE, UNDERSCORE NEED FOR STRONGER
AND MORE VARIED TIES, AND TRY TO MAKE SIMPLE POINT THAT
JAPAN IS MORE THAN SONY OR TOYOTA. AS PART OF PRESENTATION,
WE ARE TOLD FUKUDA WOULD ENDEAVOR TO DESCRIBE JAPAN'S
SECURITY POSTURE AND ITS ROLE IN STRATEGIC EQUATION OF
NORTHEAST ASIA IN TERMS MEANINGFUL TO EUROPEANS. AGAIN,
THIS WOULD BE NOTEWORTHY DEPARTURE FOR A JAPANESE PRIME
MINISTER AND IS REGARDED AS MOST DELICATE ASPECT OF SPEECH,
SINCE FUKUDA AT SAME TIME CANNOT STRAY TOO FAR BEYOND
LIMITS OF STILL FRAGILE DOMESTIC CONSENSUS ON THIS ISSUE.
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SUMMIT IMPLICATIONS FOR FUKUDA AND JAPAN:

8. APART FROM ITS SIGNIFICANCE AS AN ECONOMIC
COORDINATING MECHANISM AND ITS POTENTIAL MEANING IN TERMS
OF JAPAN-EUROPEAN RELATIONS, BONN SUMMIT IS OF COURSE

IMPORTANT TO FUKUDA IN THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONTEXT. WHILE HE HAS SUFFERED NO RECENT POLITICAL REVERSES, FUKUDA'S STANDING IN POLLS REMAINS EXTREMELY LOW AND HIS CHANCES OF EXTENDING HIS PARTY PRESIDENCY, AND HENCE PREMIERSHIP, BEYOND EXPIRATION OF FIRST TWO-YEAR PARTY TERM ARE PROBLEMATIC. IF BONN SUMMIT WERE SEEN AS "FAILURE" FOR JAPAN, IN WHICH JAPANESE SEEMED TO BE SINGLED OUT AS MAIN VILLAIN ON INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC STAGE, OR IN WHICH OTHER SUMMIT PARTNERS WERE SEEN HERE AS "GANGING-UP" ON JAPAN, FUKUDA'S STANDING AS WELL AS JAPANESE RELATIONS WITH U.S. AND EUROPE WOULD SUFFER. WHILE U.S. INTERESTS ARE NOT SYNONYMOUS WITH FUKUDA'S, WERE IT TO APPEAR THAT FOREIGN CRITICISM WAS WAVE THAT SENT HIM UNDER, ENTHUSIASM OF JAPANESE LEADERS FOR TRILATERAL ENDEAVORS, AND MORE ACTIVE GLOBAL ROLE, WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ENHANCED.

9. THERE IS ANOTHER, MORE FUNDAMENTAL, SENSITIVITY AT WORK IN THIS SITUATION, JAPANESE, DESPITE THEIR SUCCESS IN DEALING IN WESTERN MILIEU, RETAIN STRONG CULTURAL AND RACIAL IDENTITY WHICH PROFOUNDLY AFFECTS HOW THEY AS INDIVIDUALS VIEW FOREIGNERS AND HOW GOJ, AS COLLECTIVE, VIEWS FOREIGN GATHERINGS SUCH AS BONN SUMMIT. JAPANESE WILL SEE THEMSELVES, THOUGH PERHAPS OTHER ASIANS WOULD NOT, AS ASIAN REPRESENTATIVE AT BONN, AND HAVE, FOR EXAMPLE, PLEDGED TO "BEAR ASEAN CONCERNS IN MIND" DURING SUMMIT DISCUSSIONS. MOST OF TIME, JAPANESE ARE WILLING TO ADMIT JUSTICE OF MOST OF CRITICISM WE AND EUROPEANS LEVEL AGAINST THEM IN ECONOMIC SPHERE. HOWEVER, WHILE PROBABLY LESS SUSPICIOUS OF AMERICANS THAN OF EUROPEANS, THEY ARE NEVER

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----071686 101129Z /20

P 101043Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO WHITE/HOUSE WASHDC PRIORITY
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STATE FOR SECRETARY AND EA, MR. HOLBROOKE

ENTIRELY SURE THAT OTHER CONSIDERATIONS DO NOT ENTER IN --
THAT SIMPLE RACIAL PREJUDICE MAY NOT AFFECT THE WAY SOME
OF US THINK ABOUT THESE ISSUES. JAPANESE SENSITIVITY IS
A FACT OF LIFE; IF ABRADED IT CAN PRODUCE DEFENSIVE,
UNPRODUCTIVE RESPONSES.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE UNITED STATES;

10. ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL REALITIES, LIKE GEOMETRY,
UNDERScore NEED FOR STRENGTHENING JAPAN-WEST EUROPE LEG OF
TRILATERAL SYSTEM. TRILATERAL COMMISSION AND OTHER
SIMILAR TRIANGULAR VENTURES, BOTH GOVERNMENTAL
AND PRIVATE, REPRESENT RECOGNITION OF THIS NEED AND
CONSTRUCTIVE EFFORTS TO MEET IT. THEY HAVE NOT, HOWEVER,
ACHIEVED NECESSARY RESONANCE HERE, AND DEGREE OF JAPAN-
EUROPEAN MISTRUST AND MISUNDERSTANDING PERSISTS,
ENDANGERING OUR INTERESTS AS WELL AS THEIRS. EFFECTIVENESS
OF WESTERN ALLIANCE IN DEALING WITH COMPLEX ECONOMIC AND
POLITICAL PROBLEMS IT FACES DEPENDS ON CANDOR, TRUST AND
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FRIENDSHIP WITH WHICH IT IS INFUSED.

11. UNITED STATES IS OF COURSE UNIQUELY SITUATED TO
FACILITATE BETTER JAPAN-WEST EUROPE TIES, AND OUR INTERESTS
CLEARLY DICTATE THAT WE ATTEMPT TO DO SO. WHILE OUR ROLE
IS LIMITED, IT IS NEVERTHELESS ESSENTIAL. WE CAN BE
CATALYST, ENCOURAGING OUR PARTNERS TO PERSIST IN EFFORTS
TO BRIDGE POLITICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL GAP THAT CONTINUES
TO SEPARATE THEM. WE CAN OCCASIONALLY FUNCTION AS BUFFER
AS WELL, EXPLAINING EACH TO OTHER AND MODERATING THEIR
DIFFERENCES. IT IS THIS LATTER ROLE TO WHICH WE SHOULD
PERHAPS BE ALERT IN BONN. JAPANESE WILL LOOK TO US FOR
MORE INFORMED APPRECIATION OF THEIR SITUATION, AND MORE
SYMPATHETIC HEARING, THAN THEY WILL EXPECT FROM EUROPEANS.
WE CAN AFFORD TO BE RESPONSIVE, WITHOUT IN ANY SENSE
LETTING JAPANESE OFF THE HOOK ON HARD ECONOMIC QUESTIONS.

12. CONSTRUCTIVE JAPANESE WORLD ROLE REQUIRES CONTINUED
CAREFUL NURTURING. THIRTY YEARS AFTER END OF WORLD WAR
II JAPAN PERHAPS SHOULD HAVE RID ITSELF OF INHIBITIONS ITS
CULTURE AND HISTORY HAVE IMPOSED, BUT FACT IS THEY REMAIN
FORMIDABLE BARRIERS TO MORE WIDE-RANGING JAPANESE DIPLOMATIC
AND POLITICAL ACTIVITY. DESPITE RECENT EVIDENCE OF MORE
VENTURESOME DIPLOMACY, JAPANESE STILL LACK CONFIDENCE--AND
VISION--TO MATCH THEIR ECONOMIC PROWESS. TO DRAW THEM OUT,

AND TO INSURE MAJOR JAPANESE CONTRIBUTION TO MULTILATERAL
ENDEAVORS, STILL REQUIRES SPECIAL CARE IN OUR OWN APPROACHES.
THERE ARE UNIQUE FRUSTRATIONS IN DEALING WITH JAPAN TO BE
SURE, BUT REWARDS CAN BE, AND HAVE BEEN, ENORMOUS. WE NEED
TO LOOK BEYOND BONN, AND BEYOND TODAY'S FORMIDABLE SET OF
ECONOMIC PROBLEMS -- AND ENCOURAGE OUR SUMMIT PARTNERUUTO
DO LIKEWISE -- TOWARD ENDURING BENEFITS OF MORE MATURE
JAPAN-EUROPEAN RELATIONSHIP AND MORE ACTIVE GLOBAL
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ENGAGEMENT FOR JAPAN WHICH WILL INEVITABLY FOLLOW.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SUMMIT MEETINGS, POLITICAL SUMMARIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TOKYO12467
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X2
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780281-1159
Format: TEL
From: TOKYO
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780777/aaaacnck.tel
Line Count: 348
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 1b5d6078-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 7
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 78 TOKYO 12466
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2060152
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: JAPAN, EUROPE AND BONN SUMMIT: POLITICAL ASPECTS
TAGS: PEPR, JA, XG, XT
To: WHITE HOUSE STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/1b5d6078-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014